



State of Illinois

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Illinois joins “Border to Border” effort to enforce seatbelt laws, reduce injuries and fatalities

SPRINGFIELD — As summer driving season ramps up entering the Memorial Day weekend, the Illinois Department of Transportation and Illinois State Police are teaming with up more than 600 law enforcement agencies throughout the state in the national “Border to Border” mobilization. The campaign is organized by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration as part of the “Click It or Ticket” campaign.

“Over the past two years during the COVID pandemic, Illinois has seen a significant increase in traffic crashes and fatalities,” said Cynthia Watters, IDOT’s bureau chief of Safety Programs and Engineering. “We know that buckling up and securing children in child safety seats are a proven way to save lives.”

Border to Border harnesses the power of 10,000 agencies across states, cities and jurisdictions to increase seat belt use in order to save lives. The program aims to increase seat belt usage by coordinating highly visible enforcement and providing educational materials.

Illinois law enforcement will increase patrols and seat belt enforcement zones along major interstates, state border crossings and hundreds of well-traveled local roads starting May 23rd and extending through Memorial Day.

“The number of citations the Illinois State Police issued for seatbelt violations increased from 12,714 in 2020, to 15,235 in 2021, as did written warnings for seatbelt violations,” said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly. “Wearing a seatbelt is a simple action that saves lives. During the Memorial Day weekend, ISP troopers will be on the highways enforcing seatbelt laws in an effort to keep you safe.”

Nationally of the 22,215 passenger vehicle occupants killed in 2019, 47% were not wearing seat belts. In 2020, there were 16 crashes in Illinois over the Memorial Day weekend resulting in 16 fatalities. Last year’s Memorial Day weekend – the period from 6 p.m. Friday to 11:59 p.m. Monday – saw 11 crashes resulting in 14 fatalities.

Keep these tips in mind when traveling:

- Buckle up. Wearing a seat belt positions you in the vehicle safely, works with air bags to protect you and slows the body down in a crash to minimize injury.
- Slow down. Speed drastically increases the risk of injury or death in a crash.
- Sober up. Alcohol and drugs inhibit your ability to operate a vehicle. Do not use them and get behind the wheel.
- Phone down. Using a phone for talking, texting or social media is not only dangerous, it is illegal in Illinois.

Memorial Day weekend kicks off summer vacation season. Many motorists will be traveling across Illinois highways. We want everyone to arrive safely at their final destinations. For more information about Click It or Ticket, visit www.buckleupillinois.org.

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